

KANEGASAKI SISTER CITY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
January 27, 2009
4:30 PM Senior Center Alice Dowd Lounge

Members Present: Byron Koh, Florence Boynton, Denise Boyd, Carolyn Platt, Stephanie Joyce, Nancy Pagano

Members Absent: Nancy Bess, Yuko Takahashi, Helen MacMellon, Bill Hutchinson (though we're not sure if he has been appointed yet)

Guest: Jule Dupre and Kathy Woods Masalski, potential returning members

Welcome: Chair Byron Koh warmly welcomed everyone after our hiatus since last May. He brought several gifts and magazines from Kanegasaki to share with members. (Stephanie later was given most of these for her classroom at Wildwood Elementary School.)

Jones Library Report: Carolyn reported that she has gathered another collection of books to send as a gift to the Kanegasaki Library. She is still sorting to determine the final selections to send. Library Director Bonnie Isman has money to pay for postage again. Carolyn will be including local authors and some books about Amherst. Kathy was interested in knowing who is taking out books from the Jones' extensive collection from Kanegasaki. Carolyn will research this.

Kathy Woods Masalski's Update and Query:

- Kathy reported that through a friend she had learned that a physics teacher at Amherst High School might be interested in teaching in Japan. Kathy had suggested to her friends that the teacher, Aaron Kropf, contact Byron as chair of the KSCC, as well as others (such as the co-president of the Massachusetts-Hokkaido Association) to learn more about possible opportunities to teach in Japan. **Denise offered to follow up with Mr. Kropf.**
- Kathy also informed the committee of her recent commendation from Masahiko Koumura, the Foreign Minister of Japan. The commendation, which was a surprise to Kathy, recognized her contributions to the furthering of mutual understanding between Japan and the United States.
- In addition, Kathy informed the committee that in her role as director of the Five College Center for East Asian Studies, she would be organizing a study-tour program that would take middle and high school teachers to Japan in summer 2009. She said that as part of the program she would like to take the teachers to Kanegasaki or Morioka for a home stay and to visit other sites in the area.
Kathy suggested that she could do this without being a member of the KSCC, and without involving the committee, but she said that she would be happy to join the committee and assume associated responsibilities if the committee supported her doing so. **Although there was no formal vote, members present supported her submitting an application for committee membership and for requesting that Kanegasaki host Kathy and her delegation of teachers in mid-July.**
- On another subject, Kathy asked whether committee members had received recent mailings from the LaPaz sister-city committee. She suggested that the committee take a look at those letters at the next meeting and to consider doing similar fundraising for the Kanegasaki relationship.

March Visit of Kanegasaki Students and Chaperones:

Denise reported that she and Myuki are corresponding. Kanegasaki is cutting elements of the trip back because of the economy. Ten middle school students plus two chaperones and the tour guide will be in Amherst from March 19th till the 22nd. They will arrive from New York City about noon and Nancy said the suitcases can be stored at Bangs if needed and lunch can be arranged there too. Denise is still putting the details of the three days together. We brainstormed about what the group could do prior to the usual Town Hall reception and meeting of the host families at 5 PM. Ideas include a walking tour of the downtown including a visit to The Jones Library, the Amherst College Zen garden, and/or Johnson Chapel, West Cemetery to see Emily Dickinson's grave and the mural there. (A problem is that A.C. is on break at that time so special arrangements might have to be made to open any buildings.)

Kathy will host the KSCC potluck for the chaperones Friday night! Jule will take care of the chaperones from 10-2 PM on Saturday. If the weather is good, she is tentatively planning a walk to the beaver dam and a visit the Hitchcock Center. She will provide lunch at her home before driving folks to bowling with the students in Northampton.

As always, the farewell potluck for host families, Kanegasaki folks and the KSCC will be Saturday evening in the Amherst Regional High School cafeteria.

Denise will review all details of the three-day visit at the KSCC business meeting next month.

Organizational Matters:

Byron agreed to continue as Chair and others will take a turn if needed. Florence is willing to serve as Treasurer (again) and she and Nancy Bess will speak to handle the transition. Nancy Pagano will continue as Secretary and Staff Liaison, though she will rely on members to email her details about sections of the meeting they are reporting on. Kathy will rejoin the KSCC!

ADJOURNMENT The meeting ended at 6 PM. The date of the next meeting will be March 3rd at 4:30 PM in the Senior Center's Alice Dowd Lounge.

**Respectfully submitted, Nancy Hirsh Pagano, Secretary/Liaison with assistance from
Kathy Woods Masalski and Jule Dupre**